

**From:** [Matt Wickham](#)  
**To:** [Josiam, Raji](#)  
**Cc:** [Eric Pastor](#); [Roberta Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Background Study  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2016 5:16:45 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)  
[USOR WRN AOI 1-3 October 2016 - final.pdf](#)  
[1858\\_001.pdf](#)

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Raji – I wanted to document our conversation earlier about the Shaw St. background sampling location and our findings. I've attached the background WRN for reference.

At the northern background sampling location (see Figure 2 of the WRN, attached for reference), at several of the sample locations adjacent to the shoreline (the "tidally-influenced locations"), the field crew encountered some concrete rubble and minor amounts of trash such as paper, plastic, foam, etc. in the upper two feet of soil. The concrete rubble appears to have been placed there for erosion control, a common practice, and we've relocated a few sample locations to be clear of the rubble. The other stuff appears to be just trash that blew into the bayou at some point in time and ended up eventually being buried. If you were to walk along the bayou today, you would see a lot of this type of debris along much of the bayou shoreline, including near the USOR site. Anyhow, we thought it was an important enough observation to discuss with you. I think you and I agreed that if our objective is to get representative samples from the background areas, and this is what we are seeing in this particular background area (where there has been no known historical industrial activity), then let's sample the material and have it analyzed per the program. (It should be noted that there are no signs of contamination in any of the samples – no chemical odors, etc.) Furthermore, the trash observed in the soil samples is a small percentage of the overall sample – most of the sample is soil (see attached photo). You and I agreed to continue the sampling program, make note of what we are seeing (including photographs), and then review the data and ultimately come to some agreement about what (if anything) the presence of the non-native materials means.

ALSO – late today I was informed that there was difficulty in finding suitable locations for the non-tidally influenced sample locations at the Shaw St. area. See attached figure. A large part of the northern area is underlain by either a concrete slab or rubble in the subsurface. I propose that we move locations 1-5 to the area beneath the hatched area shown on the attached figure, and re-distribute them in the area to the south where locations 6-10 have been sampled. Please call to discuss in the morning or whenever you receive this email.

Thanks,  
Matt



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